

Richard Christmas of Lansing, Michigan. Mr. Christmas has been writing letters for over forty years to government officials in an attempt to set aside a day dedicated to space exploration. Over the years his letter writing campaign has payed great dividends. Ten Michigan cities, sixteen cities in other states, and a few states have dedicated a day, and sometimes a week for space exploration.

Mr. Christmas has always had an interest in space ever since he was a young boy. However, due to a severe accident he was forced to put his space ambitions on hold. After his recovery he started to write letters to government officials. At first there were few replies but as the United States Space Program gained momentum so did his letter-writing campaign. He has received several letters from mayors and governors commending him on his continuous effort and dedication to space exploration.

Today, Mr. Christmas wants more cities to become involved with making space exploration a national holiday. With the National Air and Space Museum's 25th anniversary around the corner, this would be a perfect time to promote Space Day across the country and I encourage my colleagues to support the efforts of my civic-minded constituent, Mr. Richard Christmas.

HONORING PAUL POLO FOR HIS  
OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO THE  
COMMUNITY

**HON. ROSA L. DeLAURO**

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 25, 2001*

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding Connecticut business leader and my dear friend, Paul Polo, who has been honored by the Italian American Historical Society of Greater New Haven with their 12th Annual Distinguished Service Award.

Each year, the Italian American Historical Society of Greater New Haven honors members of Connecticut's Italian American community for their service and dedication. The Distinguished Service Award is a reflection of their commitment to the Society and to it's mission—preserving the culture and heritage of Italian-Americans. Throughout his life, Paul has demonstrated a unique commitment to public service in both his professional and philanthropic efforts.

Paul's contributions to the Italian-American community are innumerable. For over four decades, Paul has been a member of the Order Sons of Italy in America, serving as president of the nation's largest and oldest Italian American organization for two years. Under his leadership, the organization raised millions of dollars that was contributed to education, medical research, and social awareness issues. Paul now serves as the president of the Sons of Italy Foundation, where he has again played a crucial role in fund-raising efforts on behalf of a variety of service organizations. In addition to his work on the national stage, Paul is also involved in several organizations in Connecticut. A member of the

Knights of Columbus, Elks, Mount Carmel Society, the Chamber of Commerce, and as an organizational representative of the American Society of Association Executives, Paul has dedicated much of his life to making a real difference in the lives of others.

An avid political activist, Paul has long been a figure in Washington as well as Connecticut. In 1991, Paul met with former President Bush as a representative from the Order Sons of Italy in America during an Oval Office meeting to discuss initiatives for social equality. In addition, he served on President Bush's policy round table. Former President Bill Clinton named Paul an alternate delegate to the U.S. Small Business Administration. Currently serving as the chairman of this year's Democratic National Convention and co-vice chairman of the Italian American Democratic Leadership Council—an organization which he helped to establish—Paul remains an active participant in public affairs.

As a respected business leader, volunteer, an political activist, Paul has left an indelible mark on the State of Connecticut. His commitment and dedication has gone a long way to enrich our communities and strengthen the bonds we share. It is with great pride that I rise today to join his children, Paul Jr., Daniel and Michael; grandchildren, Daniel Jr., Anthony, Philip, Nicole and Emily; family, friends, and colleagues in extending my sincere appreciation and congratulations to Paul Polo for his outstanding service to Connecticut and our great nation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

**HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK**

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 25, 2001*

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, due to inclement weather, I was unable to participate in the following votes. If I had been present, I would have voted as follows: Rollcall vote 85, on the Motion to Instruct Conferees on H. Con. Res. 83, establishing the congressional budget for the United States Government for fiscal year 2002, I would have voted "nay." Rollcall vote 86, on H.R. 428, concerning the participation of Taiwan in the World Health Organization, I would have voted "yea."

COMMEMORATING THE 2600TH  
BIRTHDAY OF LORD MAHAVIR

**HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 25, 2001*

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I come to the House floor today to praise the Prime Minister of India, Mr. Vajpayee, in declaring this year as the year of nonviolence. April 6 commemorates the 2600th birthday of the greatest prophet of Jainism, Lord Mahavir.

Jainism is a beautiful religion originating in India over two millennia ago, built on the principles of nonviolence, working on the self, and realization of multiplicity of truth through our

varying perspectives of life. Lord Mahavir worked tirelessly all his life until he reached Nirvana, and then embarked barefoot to spread his message of truth across the great nation of India.

Lord Mahavir practiced and preached environmental protection to safeguard trees, plants and animals for the living. The observation of the nonviolent practices of the Jainis was a major influence on the philosophy of the great Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi. The same principles of nonviolence and respect for life were practiced more recently by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in the United States, as he led the struggle for civil rights for all Americans.

Mahavir's principles are extremely important today as well. Mahavir or The Great Soul taught us liberation of soul by right knowledge, right faith and right conduct. We must all bring this into our lives to make this world a better place for our children and grandchildren.

April 6th marks the beginning of pioneering celebrations throughout the world for nonviolence, and thus I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the year 2001 as the year of nonviolence worldwide.

LETTER CARRIERS DELIVER HOPE  
TO FAMILIES IN NEED

**HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA**

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 25, 2001*

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, May 12, 2001, the largest one-day food drive in the country will take place. Letter carriers from across the nation will join together and collect nonperishable food items from their customers and the supplies will be taken to food pantries for distribution. In Milwaukee, last year's food drive benefited the community by providing a total of over 376,000 pounds of donations for more than 100 local food operations.

These contributions come at a critical time when donations to food pantries traditionally fall. During the summer months, demand for food to feed school-aged children typically peaks as access to school breakfast and lunch programs is restricted. Students suffer as their parents struggle to provide well-balanced meals. It is because of this that the National Letter Carriers Food Drive is so important to the health of our communities.

This project has been made possible by the generous sponsorship and efforts of the National Association of Letter Carriers, U.S. Postal Service, AFL-CIO, United Way of Greater Milwaukee, Harley-Davidson Motor Company, Covenant Healthcare, and Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee.

Mr. Speaker, I am here today to ask that my colleagues lend their support to the letter carriers' food drives in their own hometowns and districts. To my neighbors in Milwaukee and Waukesha counties, I ask that they look deep in their hearts and pick up a few extra non-perishable items while doing their weekly shopping. As all food collected remains in the community, these essential donations will benefit those that we work and live with.

Together we can make a difference in the fight against food shortage. May 12, 2001, the